



PRESS RELEASE

Baker-Polito Administration Announces \$3 Million in Funding, Updated Regulations to Promote Renewable Thermal Energy

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

1/19/2018

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BUZZARDS BAY — The Baker-Polito Administration today announced the [availability](#) of \$3 million in funding for the Renewable Thermal Infrastructure Grant Program to expand the availability of renewable

thermal technologies in Massachusetts. The availability of funding coincides with the release of updated Alternative Energy Portfolio Standard (APS) regulations that have been modified to encourage greater use of renewable thermal technologies across the Commonwealth. The [final APS regulations](#) will provide financial incentives for technologies such as solar hot water, fuel cells, biomass, waste-to-energy, air source heat pump, ground source heat pump, biogas and liquid biofuel. The announcement was made at the Massachusetts Maritime Academy where the school installed a solar thermal system in 2015 which heats water for the athletic facility's pool and the domestic hot water in the building, leading to reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and cost savings to the school.

“Moving toward renewable heating is a critical component to the Commonwealth’s ability to continue leading the nation in renewable energy and energy efficiency,” **said Governor Charlie Baker**. “Providing support for these technologies is an investment in our energy portfolio that will reduce costs for ratepayers and help create a clean and resilient energy future.”

“We look forward to these projects playing an important role in their local communities and delivering the many benefits renewable heating and cooling technologies can provide to Massachusetts ratepayers,” **said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito**.

The funding for the Renewable Thermal Infrastructure Grant Program is made available through Alternative Compliance Payments from retail electricity suppliers. The funds will go directly to manufacturers, distributors, and/or installers to expand the availability of a range of renewable thermal technologies in Massachusetts and may include projects such as biomass delivery trucks, biofuel manufacturing facility support, geothermal drilling equipment, and other renewable thermal infrastructure.

In November 2017, DOER and the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center [announced](#) HeatSmart Mass, a new residential heating and cooling program for seven communities. In addition, as part of its commercial-scale biomass heating program, MassCEC will offer feasibility study grants to support municipalities, non-profits, and private entities in evaluating the feasibility of biomass heating options that are eligible for the APS program. The program will help ensure that new large-scale biomass heating systems will meet the stringent sustainability and emissions criteria found in the APS while promoting responsible system siting efforts. Feasibility study awards will include support for conducting community outreach and engagement efforts as well as evaluation of best-in-class emissions control technologies. Starting this winter, proposed projects are eligible for up to \$25,000 in feasibility study funding.

“The promulgation of these regulations represents a significant opportunity for Massachusetts to bolster a crucial sector of the Massachusetts economy while reducing energy costs and carbon emissions,” **said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Matthew Beaton**. “The Baker-Polito Administration is committed to building on the progress we’ve made towards meeting our targets under the Global

Warming Solutions Act, and the regulations under the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standard will assist the Commonwealth in those efforts.”

The APS regulations were modified after robust stakeholder engagement and in accordance with legislation passed in [2014](#) and [2016](#) that directed DOER to add new eligible technologies to the APS. The APS is a market-based incentive program that requires retail electricity suppliers to purchase Alternative Energy Certificates (AECs) that are generated from eligible resources. Residents, businesses, institutions and government buildings that install one of these systems will generate certificates that they can sell to create an additional financial resource.

“The Baker-Polito Administration is committed to lowering the cost of renewable energy for all residents and increasing access and awareness to Massachusetts’ renewable thermal programs,” **said Department of Energy Resources Commissioner Judith Judson**. “Paired with the existing programs, these regulations will contribute to lower energy usage, costs, and emissions statewide.”

“Through these initiatives, Massachusetts is helping residents access cutting-edge renewable heating technologies,” **said MassCEC CEO Stephen Pike**. “The technologies supported under programs like HeatSmart Mass offer broad benefits to Massachusetts residents, providing a high level of home comfort while reducing heating costs, and at the same time helping the Commonwealth meet its greenhouse gas reduction targets.”

“Under the leadership of Governor Charlie Baker, the Administration as a whole, and Secretary Beaton in particular, are to be congratulated for the job that they have done to leverage regulations which will, in turn, inspire and incentivize investment in renewable energy technologies that will serve the Commonwealth for years to come,” **said Massachusetts Maritime Academy President Admiral Francis X. McDonald**.

“I am pleased to see Governor Baker, Secretary Beaton, and Commissioner Judson continue to show their commitment to alternative energy sources by finalizing the APS regulations,” **said State Representative David T. Vieira (R-East Falmouth)**. “I applaud Admiral McDonald and Mass Maritime Academy for being a leader in this area by installing the solar thermal system nearly three years ago. The Academy and taxpayers will now be able to benefit from these new regulations. There is still more work to be done as we explore the capabilities of hydrokinetic tidal power, right here at the Academy and at the neighboring test site in the Cape Cod Canal.”

“I commend Secretary Beaton and Commissioner Judson for their considerable efforts in updating the APS regulations to reflect recent legislative changes **said State Representative Thomas A. Golden, Jr. (D-Lowell), Chairman of the Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities, and Energy**. “Including renewable thermal technologies in the APS will increase the state’s energy efficiency savings, lower our

reliance on conventional fossil fuel generation, and provide a revenue stream to increase the deployment of renewable heating and cooling.”

“The Alternative Energy Portfolio Standard provides lesser-used technologies a forum for development; some of which will become tools to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the future. Mass Maritime’s solar thermal system fits this bill,” **said State Representative Randy Hunt (R-Sandwich)**. “Their system has heated the campus’ water since 2015, resulting in cost savings and a reduction in the school’s greenhouse gas emissions.”

In January, DOER hosted in-person [information sessions](#) in Boston and Amherst designed for market participants such as installers, developers, aggregators, brokers and other interested stakeholders to inform them about the requirements and application process.

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